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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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USDA AND NORTHEAST CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Deadline for Application May 13, 2011

USDA Rural Development, in conjunction with the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, has released details of “Stronger Economies Together” (SET), a new program that provides strategic planning and other technical assistance to bolster projects in multi-county areas in rural Vermont and New Hampshire. SET awardees will receive training and technical assistance tailored to their projects in order to achieve their community economic development goals. The intent of the program is to foster regional collaboration. Successful recipients will present projects that will have an impact on at least three counties. The goal is to assist groups or organizations that wish to capitalize on the strengths of their region and develop ways to enhance its quality of life.

SET Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must submit project concepts that have a multi-county impact (three or more counties) in Vermont or New Hampshire (or in conjunction with counties in neighboring states).
- The average rural population must be 51% or more of the region’s total population based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation; or 75% of their land area is located in rural areas of that region based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation.
- Further details about eligibility are included at the end of the application form.
- Applications are available at Rural Development’s web site by emailing gary.beem@vt.usda.gov

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- A complete application must be received electronically by May 13, 2011 (11:59 pm Eastern). Submit completed applications to: gary.beem@vt.usda.gov. You will receive an acknowledgment of receipt of your application within 36 hours.
- There is no application fee, but chosen applicants should be prepared to supply some minor logistical support.

The Stronger Economies Together program began one year ago in eight states and is now available in an additional 11 states including Vermont and New Hampshire. Since it began, 22 regions have received technical assistance to accomplish their regional projects.

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